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ABSTRACT

Three years ago, Golden West College (GWC) decided to make a major commitment to staff development as a means of revitalizing the college. This commitment was evidenced through the creation of the position of Dean of Educational Development, who is responsible solely for serving faculty needs; the Educational Development Center, which houses the activities associated with staff development; and the Educational Development Assistance Fund, which provides resources for faculty to improve classroom teaching activities. The GWC staff development program is highly individualized, focusing on: (1) conducting workshops in response to identified needs and interests; (2) promoting new ideas that appear in the literature by making journals and books dealing with the the teaching/learning process available in the Educational Development Center and through a bi-weekly newsletter which brings selected articles to faculty attention; (3) facilitating the classroom application of what faculty members have learned in workshops; and (4) providing incentives and rewards for faculty participation in the forms of salary unit credit, sabbatical leaves, supplementary pay, royalty payments for instructional materials, and peer recognition. (AYC)

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# INSTITUTIONALIZING STAFF DEVELOPMENT

by

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It is important that staff development be seen in a greater context than just its day to day operation. A college or university is essentially a community of learners. Students, faculty and administrators are all in this environment because they have a commitment to learn something. The faculty especially are in this occupation because they enjoy learning. In many ways faculty are super students. Given this philosophical base, professional development or staff development (call it what you like) becomes a very natural part of a collegiate institutional setting. The only real question then becomes one of what is the appropriate "curriculum" for these learners. Staff development is in my view an essential part of the institution to be given permanence within the structure, to be given a regular budget allocation on an annual basis, and to be given visability and support from the President's office.

At Golden West College we have institutionalized our staff development program. I want to spend most of my time illustrating what our system looks like and how it works. I also intend to talk a some about how it is financed.

A little bit of history first. Our college was established in 1967 with a charge from the Board of Directors and the District Chancellor to be innovative. Let there be no sacred cows they said. Our founding president went even farther and was

often heard to say "let change be the tradition." We recruited a change oriented faculty and we built a facility that was capable of adjusting to the way things are taught. In the early days of the college an attitude of providing service to faculty was established. We set up an instructional material center to produce faculty developed materials. An audio visual service to keep the equipment running was established. We also developed a computer service center and a television production center. To give direction to all of this we established an Associate Dean of Instruction position to make sure that the faculty needs were served. Our college has a history of providing technical support for faculty.

This organizational structure did not work as well as we had hoped however. The associate dean had so many people and programs to administer that he hardly had time to talk to faculty. We made progress in the early years because we were all young, dedicated, and we had plenty of money to support most any project. We grew so fast that we hardly had time to look at what we were doing or why.

In the 1980's things are much different. We are seeing the adverse effects of "down-sizing" the institution with reductions in force and all of the restructuring that comes with scarce resources. Three years ago we decided to make a major commitment to staff development as a means of revitalizing the college. A new position was created, Dean of Educational Development. This dean reports directly to the president, sits as full voting member of all major college councils and committees but has no

one who reports to him with the exception of a secretary. At the same time, the Educational Development Center was created to house the activities associated with professional development. This Center has created visual proof that the college has a continuing commitment to staff development. Its activities increase nearly every year. As further evidence of the commitment to staff development, the Educational Development Assistance Fund was established using hard District money not grant funds. This fund is administered by the Dean of Educational Development. It is used to provide resources for faculty to improve classroom teaching activities. The fund has a minimum of red tape and bureaucracy attached to it. We have a simple application which I usually complete in draft form after talking with the faculty member. We agree on what needs to be done and what it will take in order to accomplish the project. I make the contacts with technical support personnel to determine time and supplies requirements if needed in the project. I also have the capability to hire additional personnel such as script writers, computer programmers etc. if needed. Any project under $500 can be approved by the Dean of Educational Development. Larger projects are approved by the the appropriate supervising dean and the college president.

The primary thrust of our program is to be able to respond to individual faculty needs and to do so quickly and effectively. This fits with our learning environment orientation I mentioned earlier. We are aware that all learners do not learn at the same rate and all learners do not learn in the same way.

Similarly, all faculty are not ready for nor do they have the time for the exact same professional development. Does it not follow therefore that a staff development program, focused on faculty learning needs, must be highly individualized? Faculty have differing interests as to what will help their teaching at various times and the program must be capable of responding to the individual faculty member with the activity he/she is ready to learn. Golden West's program is what I call an "individualized response model with rewards for faculty." We do a needs assessment periodically to determine the interests of faculty and to give us planning information. If we find that a group wants a particular kind of activity, then we run a workshop or a seminar. Workshops should not, however, be the main focus of a staff development program. Too many staff development programs are judged by how many workshops or seminars are held and how many faculty and staff attend. Workshops seminars, lectures, conferences etc are good as far as they go and should be a part of a staff development program. What happens after the faculty member gets all fired up about an idea he/she hears at one of these activities is where the real pay off comes. Let me give you an example of how this works.

As the educational development officer, I do a lot of promoting of new ideas that appear in the literature. The Educational Development Center subscribes to journals and purchases books dealing with the teaching/learning process. We make these things available in the Center. To further interest faculty in these things, I write a bi-weekly newsletter which

brings certain articles to the attention of faculty. Now, I even have faculty bringing my attention to articles which they would like to see discussed in the newsletter. The interesting thing about the newsletter is that when we do a needs assessment of the faculty, they come back and say they want the very things that we have been talking about in the newsletter. One thing that is really big with our faculty and staff is computer literacy. There seems to be an insatiable demand for it. We have run nine workshops in the past three years for beginners. The problem with this is that it simply makes a faculty member want to know more. Such workshops must be followed up with making computers available to faculty. Unless they can get their hands on a microcomputer, the learning that took place in the workshop will be lost. Thus, we have followed up with a Computer Center for Faculty located in the Educational Development Center. It contains two Apple IIe and two printers and it is heavily used. We also started a Computer Users Group that helps us network on various problems associated with using a computer. Our objective now is to get a really good buy for faculty on computers. We have a fairly good one now but we are working directly with the Apple people and hope to make a break through.

I believe that this example illustrates the importance of having someone who follows up after the workshop activity. A faculty member who gets a really hot idea knows that there is someone on campus who will talk with him/her about it and then try to do something to help. Most of our money in the Educational Development Fund is spent on small grants to help

faculty move on an idea. Faculty know that I, or someone like me, will be there and that they can get help. They know that I have some resources and that I have lots of contacts with other faculty and staff who may be able to help. The Center has become the focal point for faculty. They eat there, they drink coffee there, and they talk shop there. I get into the middle of much of this and learn from them what works and what does not. We are all learners and I am one of the more avid learners in the group. Right now I am learning how to use my microcompter more effectively and I am also learning stone carving.

There needs to be reward for faculty in your staff development program. Many activities carry salary unit credit and of course there is the big one, sabbatical leave. We also pay faculty a per deim rate to work on a project which is beyond what might be considered normal instructional development. Other incentives include a royalty payment for instructional materials developed by faculty and sold by the Educational Development Center. We have just issued royalty checks to nine faculty members for materials sold this past year. Total income from the sale of faculty produced materials this year is $6.000. Ninety percent of this money goes directly back into funding more faculty projects. It is deposited in the Educational Development Assistance Fund. All rewards are not intrinsic. I do a column in the newsletter called Focus on Faculty in which I write about individuals who are doing interesting things. One faculty member commented to me during the RIFs last year that "we don't give out many atta boys" and we should. The staff development office

needs to point out to the campus and the community the qualities and accomplishments of the faculty. Next fall, Focus on Faculty, will become a part of our class schedule which is mailed to every houshold in the district. My major point is, if you want faculty to change and to innovate, you must put resources into the process. Don't expect faculty to create the new world of high tech, high touch teaching at the same time they are carrying the heavy burden of a full teaching load and don't insult them by asking them to do it for nothing. Faculty are human beings and damn smart ones at that. They respond to the same human forces that others do. Any college has resources which can be allocated to staff development. Our total budget for the activities of the Educational Development Center runs just over $100,000. Sounds like a lot doesn't it. It is, but it represents less than one half of one percent of the college budget. Doesn't sound like so much does it. Through the past three years of declining funds and a serious reduction in force last year, Educational Development has had solid support from faculty and administration. You can, you must, invest part of your resources in your college's most vital resource - the people who people the people's college.

In summary, I would like to say that this is the most exciting and satisfying job I have had in my twenty-nine years as an educator. I am a teacher. I facilitate learning. Perhaps I am not in the classroom (except for my Chinese History class) but the activities in which I am involved help those who are in the classroom become more effective. If, as I believe, teaching is

facilitating learning then I as the staff development officer am involved in teaching. That gives me personal satisfaction. This is central to what the college is all about - a lively center for learning.

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